

**PPIC Statewide Survey:  
*Special Survey on Growth***

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***Part of the  
Growth, Land Use, and Environment Series***

**In Collaboration with**

**The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation**

**The James Irvine Foundation**

**The David and Lucile Packard Foundation**

**Public  
Policy  
Institute of  
California**

The Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) is a private operating foundation established in 1994 with an endowment from William R. Hewlett. The Institute is dedicated to improving public policy in California through independent, objective, nonpartisan research.

PPIC's research agenda focuses on three program areas: population, economy, and governance and public finance. Studies within these programs are examining the underlying forces shaping California's future, cutting across a wide range of public policy concerns, including education, health care, immigration, income distribution, welfare, urban growth, and state and local finance.

PPIC was created because three concerned citizens – William R. Hewlett, Roger W. Heyns, and Arjay Miller – recognized the need for linking objective research to the realities of California public policy. Their goal was to help the state's leaders better understand the intricacies and implications of contemporary issues and make informed public policy decisions when confronted with challenges in the future.

David W. Lyon is founding President and Chief Executive Officer of PPIC.

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## Preface

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The PPIC Statewide Survey consists of an ongoing series of surveys designed to provide policymakers, the media, and the general public with objective, advocacy-free information on the opinions and public policy preferences of residents throughout the state of California. Begun in April 1998, the surveys have now generated a database that includes the responses of over 36,000 Californians.

This is the eighteenth PPIC Statewide Survey and the first in a new series of surveys that will focus on population growth, land use, and the environment. This new series – which will be carried out in addition to the traditional PPIC surveys – will be conducted in collaboration with The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, The James Irvine Foundation, and The David and Lucile Packard Foundation. There will be a total of eight surveys in the series – two per year for four years. The intent of the surveys is to inform policymakers, encourage discussion, and raise public awareness about the growth, land use, and environment issues facing the state. This initial survey focuses in particular on perceptions of population growth and its consequences.

This survey report presents the responses of 2,001 adult residents throughout the state. It examines in detail the public's views on local, regional, and statewide issues; explores the extent to which residents are aware of and concerned about population growth and its implications; and looks closely at the public's response to the state energy crisis. More specifically, it focuses on the following:

- Local and regional growth issues, including perceptions of current and future growth, traffic congestion, and air pollution; the performance of local government in handling growth issues; the adequacy of funding for infrastructure; and the willingness to consider local development restrictions even if this meant having less economic growth.
- State growth issues, including reactions to the 2000 U.S. Census findings concerning the state's population growth, racial and ethnic change, and regional population shifts; perceptions about the causes and consequences of the state's population growth; growth policy preferences; and perceptions of the effects of future population growth on the state.
- California's electric power problem, including perceptions of the relationship between population growth and electricity shortages; the effects of the electricity crisis on confidence in the state government's ability to handle planning for future growth and infrastructure needs; thoughts about who's responsible for the situation; preferences for solving the electricity situation; and whether air quality standards that regulate power plants should be relaxed.
- Political, social, and economic issues, including performance ratings of President Bush and Governor Davis; perceptions of quality of life in the state; opinions about the near-term economic future of the state; and attention to state news stories on growth and other issues.
- Variations in perceptions, attitudes, and policy preferences across the four major regions of the state (the Central Valley, San Francisco Bay area, Los Angeles area, and the rest of Southern California), between Latinos and non-Hispanic whites, and across age, socioeconomic, and political spectrums.

Copies of this report or other PPIC Statewide Surveys may be ordered by e-mail ([order@ppic.org](mailto:order@ppic.org)) or phone (415-291-4400). The reports are also posted on the publications page of the PPIC web site ([www.ppic.org](http://www.ppic.org)).



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## Press Release

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### ***SPECIAL SURVEY ON GROWTH***

#### **GROWING PAINS: ENERGY, ECONOMY CREATE ANXIETY ABOUT POPULATION SIZE**

#### **Broad Support for Higher Electricity Rates Vs. Cuts in State Programs; Residents Fatalistic About Growth, But Believe Planning Could Alleviate Problems**

SAN FRANCISCO, California, May 21, 2001 — Reeling from an escalating energy crisis and a decelerating economy, Californians are increasingly bearish about population growth and its side effects, according to a new survey released today by the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC), The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, The James Irvine Foundation, and The David and Lucile Packard Foundation. Despite the positive social and economic effects of California's past meteoric growth, Californians now believe that future population increases will make the state a less desirable place to live and say that the electricity situation — which they link to growth — has given them pause about government's ability to plan for a more crowded future.

The large-scale public opinion survey of 2001 Californians finds that for the first time since the mid-90s, more Californians believe that the state is headed in the wrong direction (48%) rather than the right direction (44%). More Californians also expect bad economic times (56%) in the next year instead of good times (38%). The attitude adjustment has been swift: In January, a majority of residents still believed the state was headed in the right direction (62%) and expected good times financially in the coming year (51%).

As their economic outlook dims, residents find little to cheer about in the latest census numbers or future population projections. Eighty-two percent believe that population growth over the next two decades will make the state a less desirable place to live. Half of state residents also call the increase of 4 million people in the past decade a "bad thing," while only 14 percent say it is a "good thing" and 36 percent say it has made no difference. Energy problems are adding to Californians' concern about future population increases: Three in four Californians believe that there is a link between the state's population growth and the recent electricity crisis, with 43 percent saying that population growth has contributed "a lot" to the supply problem. The crisis has also taken a toll on the public's trust in state government to handle future growth. Sixty-seven percent of residents say that the electricity situation has made them less confident in the state government's ability to plan and build for the future.

"Californians clearly see the electricity crisis as a harbinger of other growth-related problems," says PPIC Statewide Survey Director Mark Baldassare. "This crisis and general economic uncertainty have severely undermined public confidence in California's future and in its leaders."

Indeed, approval ratings for Governor Gray Davis have dropped by a large margin since January. Fewer than half of all Californians (46%) now say they approve of the way he is handling his job as governor, well below his 63 percent approval rating in January. Residents also remain highly critical of the governor's handling of the electricity crisis

specifically, with 60 percent saying they disapprove. While he maintains higher overall ratings (57%), President George W. Bush also receives low marks on his handling of the state's electricity problem, with 56 percent saying they disapprove. Interestingly, while Governor Davis and President Bush get poor marks on electricity, they have largely escaped blame for the problem. Residents are much more likely to fault utility companies (32%) and the former governor and legislature (26%) for the electricity situation than they are the current governor and legislature (10%), power generators (10%), the Bush Administration and federal government (8%), or California consumers (8%).

Overall, 43 percent of Californians now say that electricity is the most important issue facing California today, followed by growth (13%), education (6%), and jobs and the economy (6%). In January, residents named schools and electricity evenly at about 25 percent each. Ninety-five percent of residents believe that the cost, supply, and demand for electricity is a problem, with 82 percent saying it is a "big" problem. And the problem has amplified their general pessimism about the economy: 86 percent say that electricity issues will hurt the economy over the next few years, with 62 percent believing it will hurt the economy a "great deal." Eighty-two percent say they are closely following news stories about the crisis.

When asked to consider solutions to the electricity problem, Californians prefer building more power plants (43%) to re-regulation of the industry (27%), conservation (18%), federal price controls (8%), or higher rates (1%). In January, residents most favored re-regulation (37%) and power plant construction (32%). But despite their support for the development of more supply, residents are not willing to relax the air quality standards that regulate power plants at this point in the crisis: 70 percent say they are unwilling to accept this tradeoff. However, they are willing to make a key financial tradeoff: 58 percent say they would rather the state issue bonds that will be paid by consumers through higher rates than use taxpayer funds that would otherwise go to state programs such as schools, health, and infrastructure. "Despite the hard times brought about by the electricity crisis, residents want planning and building for the state's future to take place. And they appear willing to ante up," says Baldassare.

### **Planning a Priority, But By Whom?**

Although many Californians (58%) believe that population growth in the state is inevitable, a solid majority (66%) also say that most growth-related problems can be avoided with good planning. However, residents are conflicted about who should be doing the planning. On one hand, they are adamant that cities and local governments (74%) rather than state government (24%) control local growth and development. On the other, they are more likely to believe that local voters should make growth-related decisions by voting on local initiatives (63%), rather than local elected officials taking action after planning reviews and public hearings (35%). Perhaps as a consequence of a slowing economy, fewer Californians today (51%) than one year ago (58%) say they would support a local initiative to slow down the pace of development in their city or community, even if it meant having less economic growth.

On the whole, most Californians (60%) think their cities and communities have been growing rapidly — and most (60%) also expect rapid growth to continue in their region — but they see their local government as having done little to manage the consequences. Only 7 percent give their city government "excellent" ratings for their handling of growth issues, while 33 percent rate them as "good," 36 percent "fair," and 17 percent "poor." This

ambivalence may help to explain in part why a majority of residents say they would oppose paying a higher sales tax to help local government in their region pay for roads, transit, and other infrastructure projects *even though* more residents than not (48% to 43%) also believe that their local government does not have adequate funding for those projects.

### **Different Regions View Growth Differently**

Most Californians believe that the broader regions they live in have growth-related problems. Specifically, most say that traffic congestion (83%), the availability of affordable housing (73%), population growth and development (66%), air pollution (64%), and the lack of opportunities for well-paying jobs (61%) are problems in their area. However, the perception of each of these problems varies greatly from region to region. San Francisco Bay Area residents, for example, are far more likely than residents in other parts of the state to view traffic (96%) and housing (91%) as problems, while more Central Valley residents view the lack of well-paying jobs (73%) as a problem, and Los Angeles County residents express greater concern about air pollution (78%). Asked about the biggest problem associated with growth, residents from Los Angeles (33%) and other Southern California counties (31%) say traffic congestion, Central Valley residents (33%) mention urban sprawl and the loss of open space, and Bay Area residents (39%) cite high housing costs.

Californians are also divided along regional lines when it comes to the question of where new growth should occur. Residents of the Bay Area (54%) and the Central Valley (51%) say that they prefer new growth take place within the developed areas of a region, while residents of Los Angeles (59%) and other Southern California counties (56%) believe it is better if new growth happens in the undeveloped areas on the outskirts of a region. Finally, while there is agreement across the state that an improving economy (41%), followed by increasing racial and ethnic diversity (23%), are the most positive consequences of population growth to date, residents are more at odds about the most important priority for growth planning. Residents of the Central Valley (50%), Los Angeles (42%), and other Southern California counties (45%) say that improving the economy should be the top priority, but Bay Area residents are evenly divided between improving the economy (36%) and environmental protection (36%).

“Californians are experiencing the state’s rapid growth in many different ways, a fact that goes a long way toward explaining their desire to decide growth issues on a local level,” says Dennis Collins, President of the James Irvine Foundation. “The key is to develop the capacity at the local level to manage growth wisely, while opening a statewide dialogue about the best ways to address our common concerns.”

### **Other Key Findings**

- *Where Does Growth Come From?* (page 6)

Most Californians (55%) believe that the single biggest cause of California’s population growth is immigration, even though demographers cite births to current residents as the major factor.

- *Diversity Celebrated* (page 5)

Throughout the state and across racial and ethnic groups, more residents say that the state’s majority-minority status is a “good thing” (40%) than a “bad thing” (16%).

### About the Survey

The survey on growth is a special edition of the PPIC Statewide Survey. It is the first in a four-year, multi-survey series on growth, land use, and the environment being produced in collaboration with The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, The James Irvine Foundation, and The David and Lucile Packard Foundation. The purpose of this series is to inform policymakers, encourage discussion, and raise public awareness about the critical growth, development, and environmental challenges facing the state. Findings of the current survey are based on a telephone survey of 2,001 California adult residents interviewed from May 1 to May 9, 2001. Interviews were conducted in English or Spanish. The sampling error for the total sample is +/- 2%. For more information on survey methodology, see page 21.

Dr. Mark Baldassare is a senior fellow and program director at PPIC, where he holds the Arjay and Frances Miller Chair in Public Policy. He is founder and director of the PPIC Statewide Survey, which he has conducted since 1998. Dr. Baldassare is the author of numerous books, including *California in the New Millennium: The Changing Social and Political Landscape* (University of California Press, 2000).

PPIC is a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to objective, nonpartisan research on economic, social, and political issues that affect Californians. The Institute was established in 1994 with an endowment from William R. Hewlett. This report will appear on PPIC's website ([www.ppic.org](http://www.ppic.org)) on May 21, 2001.

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## Local and Regional Growth Issues

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### Local Population Growth

Most Californians think the population of their cities and communities is growing rapidly, but far fewer rate their city governments as good or excellent at handling local growth issues.

For the state overall, 60 percent of residents believe their cities have experienced rapid growth. Although Los Angeles residents are slightly less likely than others to see rapid growth, the perception holds over all regions of the state and across political and demographic groups.

This high perception of rapid growth is not matched by high confidence in how city governments are handling growth-generated issues. Although four in 10 residents rate their city's performance as good or excellent, only 7 percent confer an "excellent" rating. More than 50 percent give a "fair" or "poor" rating. Again, there is little difference across racial and ethnic groups, regions of the state, demographic groups, and the political spectrum.

Among those who see rapid growth, only 37 percent say their city governments are doing an excellent or good job on the issues. In contrast, among those who say that they have experienced slow growth, half give their city governments good or excellent marks.

**"In the past few years, do you think the population of your city or community has been growing rapidly, growing slowly, staying about the same, or declining?"**

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
<b>Growing rapidly</b>	60%	65%	66%	54%	63%	59%
<b>Growing slowly</b>	20	19	18	20	20	21
<b>Staying the same</b>	15	12	12	21	13	15
<b>Declining</b>	2	2	1	2	1	2
<b>Don't know</b>	3	2	3	3	3	3

**"How would you rate the performance of your city government when it comes to handling growth issues?"**

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
<b>Excellent</b>	7%	7%	6%	7%	8%	7%
<b>Good</b>	33	32	34	33	31	35
<b>Fair</b>	36	36	36	37	35	39
<b>Poor</b>	17	18	16	17	18	15
<b>Don't know, not in city</b>	7	7	8	6	8	4

## Local Growth Control Initiatives

Past surveys have shown that lack of confidence in government to solve problems goes hand-in-hand with Californians' tendency to seek solutions through the initiative process. That evidently goes for growth issues, as well. A slight majority (51%) say they would vote “yes” on a local initiative that would slow down the pace of development, even if it meant having less economic growth. Nevertheless, public support for slowing growth has softened: When we asked this same question a year ago, 58 percent of residents said they would support a local growth control initiative.

Public support for a local growth control initiative is strongest in the San Francisco Bay area and weakest in the Central Valley. Latinos are divided on slowing down the pace of development (46% to 48%), while non-Hispanic whites tend to favor local growth control (53% to 39%). Older, college educated, and higher-income residents are more likely to support local growth controls. Republicans, Democrats, and independent voters all show more support than opposition. Those residents who perceive rapid growth in their area are most likely to support local growth controls.

**"If an election were held today, would you vote yes or no on a local initiative that would slow down the pace of development in your city or community, even if this meant having less economic growth?"**

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Yes	51%	47%	56%	49%	52%	46%
No	41	47	34	42	41	48
Don't know	8	6	10	9	7	6

## Regional Problems

Most Californians believe that regions as well as cities have growth-related problems. They rate traffic congestion (83%), the availability of housing they can afford (73%), population growth and development (66%), and air pollution (64%) as at least “somewhat of a problem.” By comparison, 61 percent say a lack of opportunities for well-paying jobs is at least somewhat of a problem.

Traffic congestion (60%) and the availability of affordable housing (47%) have the highest ratings as “big” problems, followed by air pollution (30%), growth and development (29%), and lack of good job opportunities (29%).

Across regions, San Francisco Bay Area residents are by far the most concerned, while Central Valley residents are the least concerned, about traffic congestion, high housing costs, and growth and development. Conversely, Central Valley residents are the most likely to note the lack of well-paying jobs in their region, while San Francisco Bay area residents are the least likely to say this issue is a problem. Los Angeles residents are the most likely to rate air pollution as a big problem.

Latinos are more likely than non-Hispanic whites to say there is a big problem with air pollution (36% to 27%) and the lack of well-paying jobs (39% to 24%) and less inclined to rate traffic (53% to 60%), housing (41% to 49%), and growth (24% to 31%) as serious regional problems.

A year ago, Californians were less likely than today (44% to 60%) to say that traffic is a big problem, while their ratings of growth and air pollution remain unchanged.

"In your region today, how much of a problem is ..."

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
<i>Traffic congestion</i>						
Big problem	60%	34%	82%	69%	58%	53%
Somewhat of a problem	23	30	14	20	27	26
Not a problem	17	36	4	11	15	21
Don't know	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>The availability of housing you can afford</i>						
Big problem	47%	26%	74%	40%	45%	41%
Somewhat of a problem	26	28	17	34	25	31
Not a problem	25	43	8	24	28	26
Don't know	2	3	1	2	2	2
<i>Population growth and development</i>						
Big problem	29%	23%	39%	28%	28%	24%
Somewhat of a problem	37	36	40	38	35	36
Not a problem	32	41	19	31	36	38
Don't know	2	0	2	3	1	2
<i>Air pollution</i>						
Big problem	30%	33%	22%	46%	25%	36%
Somewhat of a problem	34	33	41	32	37	32
Not a problem	36	34	37	22	38	32
Don't know	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>The lack of opportunities for well-paying jobs</i>						
Big problem	29%	40%	18%	31%	25%	39%
Somewhat of a problem	32	33	30	33	33	32
Not a problem	35	24	49	32	38	26
Don't know	4	3	3	4	4	3

## Preparing for Regional Growth

Most Californians expect growth in their regions, and most believe that local governments do not have adequate funding to prepare for that growth. Nevertheless, the majority opposes paying higher taxes to meet the infrastructure needs of a growing population.

When asked about future population growth, six in 10 residents say they expect their regional population to grow rapidly. People living outside of Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay area are the most likely to expect rapid growth. That belief is consistent with current trends and with population projections predicting more rapid growth outside of the urban coastal region than inside these two areas.

Nearly half of Californians believe that their local government does not have adequate funding for the roads and other infrastructure needed to handle future growth in their regions. That belief is shared by a majority of Democrats, Republicans, and independent voters. However, Los Angeles residents are more likely than residents of other regions, and Latinos are more likely than non-Hispanic whites (51% to 39%), to believe that local government *does* have adequate funding.

Concern about inadequate funding does not open many wallets. A solid majority (56%) of the state's residents say they are opposed to paying a higher sales tax so that local governments would have more money to prepare for future growth in their region. Although the majority in every region opposes this suggestion, residents in the northern part of the state show more willingness than those in the south to pay higher taxes. Democrats are divided on this issue, while Republicans and independent voters are solidly opposed.

Money concerns aside, Californians overwhelmingly agree that local governments should work together on local growth issues (89%) rather than make decisions about growth issues on their own (8%).

"Overall, do you think your local government does or does not have adequate funding for the roads, transit, and other infrastructure projects that are needed to prepare for future growth in your region?"

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Does	43%	41%	37%	49%	43%	51%
Does not	48	51	51	43	46	43
Other/Don't know	9	8	12	8	11	6

"Some say that local governments will have to spend much more money on new roads, transit, and other infrastructure projects to prepare for future growth in your region. Would you favor or oppose paying a higher sales tax for this purpose?"

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Favor	41%	45%	45%	37%	40%	47%
Oppose	56	53	53	59	57	49
Don't know	3	2	2	4	3	4

## State Growth Issues

### Census 2000 and State Population Trends

The population trends outlined in the recently released 2000 Census are troubling to many Californians. Although half said it made no difference to them, state residents were more likely to consider it a bad thing (33%) than a good thing (15%) that the state's population has now reached 33.9 million. When growth is couched in terms of how many more people were added to the population, the reaction to growth is more negative: Although 14 percent still see this increase as a good thing, 50 percent see it as bad. State residents were more divided about news that the state's inland regions grew faster than the coastal regions: 32 percent said it was a good thing, 24 percent said it was a bad thing, and 44 percent said it made no difference.

As for the Census finding that got the most headlines—the state no longer has a majority racial or ethnic group—Californians were much more likely to say this was a good thing (40%) than a bad thing (16%), and 44 percent said it made no difference. San Francisco Bay area residents are the most positive. Response to this news did not differ across racial and ethnic groups.

**"For each of the following census figures, please tell me if you think it is a good thing or a bad thing or if it makes no difference to you."**

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
<i>The state has reached a population of 33.9 million people</i>						
Good thing	15%	16%	13%	16%	13%	22%
Bad thing	33	32	36	34	31	29
No difference, don't know	52	52	51	50	56	49
<i>The state has 4 million more people than it did 10 years ago</i>						
Good thing	14%	17%	14%	14%	13%	19%
Bad thing	50	49	52	49	48	43
No difference, don't know	36	34	34	37	39	38
<i>The state's inland areas grew faster than the Bay Area and Los Angeles</i>						
Good thing	32%	32%	38%	29%	31%	33%
Bad thing	24	33	22	22	22	27
No difference, Don't know	44	35	40	49	47	40
<i>The state has no racial or ethnic group in the majority</i>						
Good thing	40%	37%	47%	38%	38%	37%
Bad thing	16	14	16	17	16	20
No difference, don't know	44	49	37	45	46	43

Note: "Don't know" responses range from 1 to 3 percent for the questions in this table.

### Primary Cause of the State's Growth

According to demographers, the factor most responsible for the state's population growth is births to current residents. Most Californians think otherwise: 55 percent believe immigration is the single biggest factor in the growth, while 25 percent name migration from other states, and 7 percent say state and local policies. Only 8 percent point to births. Latinos are somewhat more likely than non-Hispanic whites to cite births to current residents as the most important cause. Nevertheless, in all racial and ethnic groups and in every region, immigration and migration were named as the top two causes of population growth.

"Which of the following do you think is the single biggest factor that is causing the state's population to grow?"

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Foreign immigration	55%	56%	55%	61%	51%	47%
Migration inside the U.S.	25	20	28	20	29	21
Births	8	12	5	10	7	14
State and local policies	7	7	6	5	7	11
Other/Don't know	5	5	6	4	6	7

### Negative Consequences of the State's Growth

What are the most negative consequences of this growth? Overall, residents are almost equally likely to name traffic congestion (29%), high housing costs (27%), and urban sprawl and loss of open space (24%). However, response varies significantly by region. For Central Valley residents, sprawl tops the list; for the San Francisco Bay Area, high housing costs; and for Los Angeles and the rest of Southern Californian, traffic. Latinos were more likely than non-Hispanic whites to name housing (33% to 22%) and less likely to focus on sprawl (18% to 28%).

"Which of the following do you think is the most negative consequence of the state's population growth?"

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Traffic congestion	29%	19%	27%	33%	31%	27%
High housing costs	27	22	39	22	25	33
Urban sprawl, loss of open space	24	33	22	21	22	18
Pollution	16	22	7	20	17	18
Other/Don't know	4	4	5	4	5	4

## Positive Consequences of the State's Growth

What are the most positive consequences of population growth? Improving the economy was named most (41%), followed by increasing social diversity (23%) and more state and local tax revenues (21%). Only 8 percent of residents see improvement of services and amenities as the most positive result of growth. In all groups, the economic benefits are mentioned more often than other issues. However, in Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay area—the most racially and ethnically diverse regions—residents are more likely than others to cite increasing diversity as the top benefit. Latinos and non-Hispanic whites have similar views about the benefits of the state's growth.

"Which of the following do you think is the most positive consequence of the state's population growth?"

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Improving economy	41%	42%	43%	36%	45%	42%
Increasing diversity	23	21	28	25	20	20
Tax revenues	21	21	18	23	21	24
Services, amenities	8	9	6	9	7	10
Other/Don't know	7	7	5	7	7	4

## State Growth and the Future

The California Department of Finance has predicted that by 2020 California will have 10 million more people, bringing the state population to 45 million. Response to this projection is overwhelmingly negative: 82 percent of residents believe this growth will make the state a less desirable place for them to live in; only 13 percent believe it will make it a more desirable place of residence. The public's attitude toward this population trend is mostly negative in all regions, political parties, and in racial and ethnic and other demographic groups.

"By 2020, California is predicted to reach a population of 45 million, gaining 10 million more people. Please tell me if you think this will make California a more desirable or a less desirable place for you to live."

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
More desirable	13%	18%	10%	15%	13%	23%
Less desirable	82	78	85	80	80	74
No difference/Don't know	5	4	5	5	7	3

## Inevitability of Growth and Its Problems

A solid majority of Californians see population growth as inevitable. However, an even larger majority believes that growth problems could be avoided through good planning.

Will growth just happen or does it depend on the state's ability to absorb new residents? Fifty-eight percent of Californians believe that population growth will take place no matter what the circumstances. However, 39 percent believe growth depends on providing roads, housing, and infrastructure. The perception of inevitability does not vary by region but does vary by ethnicity. Non-Hispanic whites (63%) are more likely than Latinos (50%) to see population growth as inevitable. The perception that growth is a "given" increases with education and income.

Can potential growth problems be avoided? Two-thirds of Californians think that good planning can forestall growth problems; 33 percent disagree. This balance of perceptions persists across the state's major regions and is not significantly different across political, racial and ethnic, and other demographic groups.

"Is the first or the second statement closer to your views?"

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Population growth in this state is inevitable	58%	60%	57%	57%	59%	50%
Population growth in this state depends on roads, housing, and other infrastructure	39	38	40	39	38	45
Other/Don't know	3	2	3	4	3	5

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Most growth problems can be avoided with good planning	66%	67%	69%	66%	67%	64%
Most growth problems cannot be avoided	33	32	30	33	32	35
Other/Don't know	1	1	1	1	1	1

## Local and State Government Roles

Although Californians give their city governments rather lukewarm ratings for handling growth issues, they would prefer that local government—rather than the state—guide local growth and development. They would prefer even more that local voters make growth decisions by initiative rather than have local elected officials make those decisions.

Only 24 percent of residents say that state government should take a more active role in guiding local growth and development. In contrast, 74 percent say that city and county governments should make the decisions on growth issues. This preference persists across regions and ethnic groups, as well as all political and demographic groups. However, Los Angeles residents are more likely than residents of other regions, and Latinos (34%) are more likely than non-Hispanic whites (19%), to want the state government more involved.

By a two-to-one margin, Californians choose the local initiative process over their local elected officials when asked how growth-related decisions should be made. This preference for “direct” over representative democracy is evident across political parties but declines with age, education, and income.

"Is the first or the second statement closer to your views?"

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
State government should take a more active role in guiding local growth and development	24%	20%	21%	32%	23%	34%
City and county governments should decide local growth and development	74	78	76	65	76	63
Other/Don't know	2	2	3	3	1	3

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Local elected officials should make growth-related decisions after going through a process of planning reviews and public hearings	35%	36%	40%	33%	32%	29%
Local voters should make growth-related decisions by voting on local initiatives	63	63	58	64	65	69
Other/Don't know	2	1	2	3	3	2

## Important Priorities for Growth Planning

Given a choice among three priorities for growth planning, Californians, overall, put improving jobs and the economy first (43%). The next priority is environmental protection (34%), with providing for social needs a distant third (21%). These numbers mask some significant differences across regions and groups. San Francisco Bay area residents give the environment and the economy equal priority, while Central Valley residents see the economy as much more important. Independent voters choose protecting the environment over improving the economy (42% to 32%), Republicans strongly favor the economy over the environment (49% to 27%), and Democrats are equally likely to choose the economy or the environment (39% to 38%). Improving the economy is the top priority among Latinos, lower-income households, and less-educated residents.

"What do you think should be the most important priority in planning for growth?"

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Improving the economy	43%	50%	36%	42%	45%	47%
Protecting environment	34	34	36	33	35	33
Providing social needs	21	14	25	23	19	18
Other/Don't know	2	2	3	2	1	2

## Where Should Growth Occur?

Californians are divided about where they want new growth to take place: 45 percent want new growth to take place in the developed areas inside the region, while 51 percent want new growth in the undeveloped areas on the outskirts of the region. There is a North-South split on this question. Central Valley and San Francisco Bay area residents are most inclined to want growth inside the region, while Los Angeles and the rest of Southern California prefer growth on the outskirts. Non-Hispanic whites (49%) are somewhat more likely than Latinos (40%) to favor growth inside the region. Support for growth inside the region increases with income and education. There are no differences across political parties.

"It is better if new growth takes place ..."

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
In the developed areas inside the region	45%	51%	54%	37%	40%	40%
In the undeveloped areas on the outskirts of the region	51	45	42	59	56	56
Other/Don't know	4	4	4	4	4	4

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## California's Electricity Problems

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### Most Important Issue

Californians have electricity very much on their minds. Forty-three percent named electricity price, supply, and demand as the most important state issue. In the three-year history of the PPIC Statewide Survey, no other issue has been named the top problem by so many Californians.

After electricity, the issue named most frequently—growth and overpopulation—was 30 points lower at 13 percent. Even the slowing economy (6%) failed to get much interest relative to electricity. Moreover, schools and education, which dominated the public's concerns in past Statewide Surveys, have now fallen to single digits. As recently as January 2001, responding to a slightly different question wording, Californians named schools and electricity equally at about 25 percent each. For the two previous years, schools and education had been the top issue on residents' lists of concerns.

Although electricity is easily the most important issue for all areas of the state, Los Angeles residents (33%)—who are somewhat insulated from the power crisis—are noticeably less likely than those who live in the rest of Southern California (44%) and the Central Valley or the San Francisco Bay area (48% each) to mention the electricity problem. After the electricity problem, Los Angeles residents are more concerned than residents of other regions about schools (10%) and jobs (9%). San Francisco Bay area residents are more concerned than others about growth (17%) and housing (8%).

Latinos are less concerned than non-Hispanic whites about electricity (35% to 47%) and growth (7% to 15%) but are much more concerned about jobs (12% to 3%). Republicans (50%) and Democrats (42%) cite electricity problems more often than do other voters (39%) and nonvoters (37%). Mention of electricity increases with age, income, and education. Men (49%) are more likely than women (37%) to put the electricity problem at the top of their lists of policy concerns.

"What do you think is the most important issue facing California today?"

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Electricity price / supply / demand	43%	48%	48%	33%	44%	35%
Growth, overpopulation	13	10	17	10	13	7
Schools, education	6	7	5	10	4	8
Jobs, the economy, unemployment	6	7	3	9	5	12
Environment, pollution	4	4	2	6	4	4
Traffic and transportation	4	2	4	5	4	4
Housing costs, housing availability	4	2	8	1	4	3
Immigration, illegal immigration	3	2	3	5	4	4
Crime, gangs	3	3	1	4	4	5
Other	9	12	7	10	9	10
Don't know	5	3	3	7	5	8

## Problem Seriousness

Almost all Californians (95%) agree that the cost, supply, and demand for electricity is a problem, and 82 percent believe it is a “big” problem. Concern over the seriousness of this issue has increased significantly since the January survey, when 74 percent said the electricity situation was a “big” problem.

Electricity is perceived as a serious problem by large majorities in all regions, although Los Angeles residents (77%) are less likely than others to view it as a “big” problem. There are no differences between Latinos and non-Hispanic whites on this ranking of problem seriousness and only slight variations across political and demographic groups.

Will electricity problems today hurt the state's economy in the next few years? Eighty-six percent think it will. Sixty two percent believe the effect on the economy will be severe and 24 percent believe it will be modest. Again, public concern is increasing over time: In January, 56 percent said electricity problems would hurt the economy “a great deal.”

Public perceptions about negative effects on the economy vary modestly between the northern and southern regions of the state: San Francisco Bay area (65%) and Central Valley (68%) residents are somewhat more likely than residents of Los Angeles (60%) and the rest of Southern California (62%) to say the electricity problem will hurt the economy a great deal. Latinos (62%) and non-Hispanic whites (63%) are just as likely to think the negative effects will be large. There are no large differences in the perceived effects of the electricity problems across demographic or political groups.

"How much of a problem is the cost, supply, and demand for electricity in California today?"

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Big problem	82%	85%	83%	77%	86%	83%
Somewhat of a problem	13	13	13	16	9	13
Not much of a problem	5	2	3	6	4	4
Don't know	0	0	1	1	1	0

"In the next few years, do you think the issue of the cost, supply, and demand for electricity will hurt the California economy or not?"

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Yes, a great deal	62%	68%	65%	60%	62%	62%
Yes, somewhat	24	20	24	24	24	26
No	12	10	9	14	12	11
Don't know	2	2	2	2	2	1

## Causes

Governor Gray Davis has seen his approval ratings fall since the January Statewide Survey, and most Californians are unhappy with his *handling* of the electricity situation. Nevertheless, Californians are not putting the primary *blame* for the situation on Governor Davis and the current legislature. Residents are most likely to blame the electric utility companies (32%) and the former governor and legislature (26%) and much less likely to blame the current state government (10%), the power generators (10%), the Bush administration (8%), or consumers (8%).

In January, given a slightly different list of choices, 47 percent of adult residents chose the deregulation of the state's electricity industry as most to blame for the problem. This was followed by the electric companies (25%), consumers (10%), and the current governor and legislature (9%). Thus, the tendency to lay the blame on the current governor and legislature has not increased.

Compared to other regions, the San Francisco Bay area is more likely to blame the former governor and legislature (33%). Latinos are less likely than non-Hispanic whites to blame the former state government (22% to 28%) and more likely to blame consumers (14% to 6%) and the utilities (35% to 31%).

Republicans are more likely than Democrats to blame the current governor and legislature (18% to 5%) and less likely to blame the Bush administration (4% to 11%).

There are several important variations in perceptions of blame across demographic groups. Younger adults, lower income households, and less educated residents are much less likely to blame the former state government, while they are more likely to blame consumers, Bush, and the electric companies.

"Who do you think is most to blame for the current electricity situation in California?"

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
The electric utility companies	32%	31%	29%	31%	34%	35%
The former Governor and legislature	26	23	33	23	26	22
The current Governor and legislature	10	13	10	11	8	6
The power generators	10	10	10	9	13	8
The Bush administration and federal government	8	8	7	10	6	10
California consumers	8	7	6	9	7	14
Don't know	6	8	5	7	6	5

## Solutions

How would Californians prefer to get out of the situation? Forty-three percent favor building more power plants; only 1 percent opt for raising electricity rates. After building more plants, re-regulation (27%) is the most preferred solution, followed by conservation (18%), and federal price controls on power generators (8%). In January, given a list of options that did not include federal price controls, Californians most favored re-regulation (37%), followed by building more power plants (32%), conservation (20%), and raising electricity rates (1%). Thus, building more power plants appears to have gained, while re-regulation has lost, popularity.

Republicans are more likely than Democrats to support building plants (53% to 39%), while Democrats are more in favor of conservation (17% to 12%) and re-regulation (30% to 25%). Preferred solutions vary little by region. Compared with non-Hispanic whites, Latinos favor conservation more (24% to 15%) and re-regulation less (22% to 28%). There is also a large generation gap: 18-to-24-year-olds support conservation much more than those 55 and older do (27% to 11%), while the oldest age group is more likely to support building more plants (54% to 38%). Lower-income and less-educated residents tend to support conservation and oppose re-regulation more than do others.

"Which of the following solutions for the current electricity situation in California do you most prefer?"

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Build more power plants	43%	48%	42%	42%	44%	46%
Re-regulate the state's electricity industry	27	22	27	27	27	22
Encourage consumers to conserve energy	18	20	18	20	15	24
Federal price controls on power generators	8	6	8	8	9	6
Raise electricity prices	1	1	3	1	1	0
Other/Don't know	3	3	2	2	4	2

## Energy Supply and Environmental Tradeoffs

Are Californians willing to relax air quality standards for power plants in order to increase the energy supply? At this point in the electricity crisis, most are not: 70 percent oppose relaxing environmental standards; 27 percent are in favor. Opposition is strong in every part of the state, but there is more support for this idea (31%) in the area of Southern California outside of Los Angeles. Although a majority in all political groups oppose this tradeoff, Republicans (58%) are less opposed than Democrats (77%) or other voters (72%). Even among those who most prefer building more plants, 58 percent oppose doing so at the expense of air quality.

Non-Hispanic whites are only slightly more likely than Latinos (29% to 25%) to favor relaxing air quality standards. Those 55 or older were more likely than younger adults (35% to 25%) and women were less likely than men (21% to 34%) to favor the tradeoff. There were no significant differences by income or educational level. For all demographic and political groups, maintaining air quality standards was more important than increasing the electricity supply.

"State officials are looking for ways to increase the electricity supply. Do you favor or oppose relaxing air quality standards that regulate power plants, even if it means more air pollution?"

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Favor	27%	26%	25%	26%	31%	25%
Oppose	70	71	73	72	64	73
Don't know	3	3	2	2	5	2

### Energy Costs and Fiscal Tradeoffs

What method would residents prefer for paying the billions of dollars the state has incurred in electricity debts: issuing bonds paid by consumers through higher electricity rates or using taxpayer funds that would otherwise go to state programs? Fifty-eight percent choose issuing bonds; 32 percent prefer using taxpayer funds.

Although San Francisco Bay Area residents are more likely than others to favor bonds paid for by higher rates, this preference is consistent across all four regions. Republicans (32%) are somewhat more likely than Democrats (26%) and other voters (29%) to favor using taxpayer funds, but a solid majority in all political groups prefer bonds. A greater percentage of Latinos (40%) than non-Hispanic whites (29%) prefer taking state funds from other programs.

Although a majority of all major demographic groups favor bonds paid for by higher rates, there are differences by income and education level: People in households making less than \$40,000 are less likely than those in households making \$80,000 per year (53% to 67%) to favor bonds. Similarly, adults with no college are less likely than college graduates (47% to 67%) to prefer bonds.

"Which do you prefer for paying the billions of dollars in state debts from buying electricity over the past few months?"

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
Issue bonds that will be paid by consumers through higher electricity rates	58%	56%	67%	57%	52%	54%
Use taxpayer funds that would otherwise go to state programs such as schools, health, and infrastructure	32	33	25	32	36	40
Other/Don't know	10	11	8	11	12	6

## Growth and Infrastructure

Three in four Californians believe population growth has contributed to the current electricity crisis, and 43 percent say it has contributed a lot. Residents of the San Francisco Bay Area (50%) are more likely than others, while Los Angeles (40%) residents are the least likely, to hold this view. Perceptions of local population growth seem to matter: Half of those who said their city or community has been growing rapidly think growth has contributed a lot to the energy crisis. Among other residents, a third believe population growth has had a big effect.

The electricity crisis has also taken a toll on the public's faith in state government to prepare for growth. Two-in-three residents say the electricity crisis has made them feel less confident in the state government's ability to plan for the future, including building the necessary roads and infrastructure. This lack of trust in state government is similar across all four regions. None of the political groups expresses much trust, but Republicans (74%) are somewhat more likely than Democrats (64%) and independent voters (67%) to say that the electricity crisis has made them less confident in the state government's ability to plan for infrastructure. Non-Hispanic whites (70%) are more likely than Latinos (63%) to say they now have less confidence in the state government's planning abilities.

"How much do you think population growth in California has contributed to the current electricity supply problems?"

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
A lot	43%	44%	50%	40%	42%	42%
Some	33	33	31	32	34	34
Not much	23	22	18	27	23	23
Don't know	1	1	1	1	1	1

"Does the electricity situation make you more confident or less confident in the state government's ability to plan for the future—including building the necessary roads and other infrastructure—or does it make no difference to you?"

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
More confident	7%	8%	6%	7%	9%	11%
Less confident	67	66	65	67	68	63
No difference	25	24	28	25	22	25
Don't know	1	2	1	1	1	1

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## Political, Social, and Economic Trends

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### Governor's Approval Ratings

Governor Gray Davis' job approval ratings have dropped by a large margin since the January PPIC Statewide Survey. Today, fewer than half of all Californians (46%) say they approve of the way he is handling his job as governor. This approval rating is well below those he received in September 2000 (66%), October 2000 (60%), and January 2001 (63%).

While his overall job approval rating has slipped, Governor Davis' ratings among Democrats (59%) are much higher than among Republicans (31%) and other voters (41%). The ratings are also higher among Latinos (56%) than among non-Hispanic whites (40%). Approval declines as age, income, and education levels rise, but these trends also reflect partisan differences. The governor's approval ratings are similar across regions, and there are no differences in ratings between men and women.

Concerning the governor's handling of the electricity problem, there has been no significant change since January. At that time, 62 percent disapproved; in this survey, 60 percent disapprove. Disapproval varies across political groups: Among Republicans, 72 percent disapprove of Davis' handling of the electricity problem, compared with 52 percent of Democrats and 65 percent of other voters. Latinos (54%) are less likely than non-Hispanic whites (64%) to disapprove of his performance on this issue. Disapproval of the governor on this issue increases with income and education, but there are no regional, age, or gender differences in the approval ratings.

	All Adults	Party Registration			Not Registered to Vote	Latino
		Democrat	Republican	Other Voters		
<i>Do you approve or disapprove of the way that Gray Davis is handling his job as governor of California?</i>						
Approve	46%	59%	31%	41%	47%	56%
Disapprove	41	31	61	44	31	32
Don't know	13	10	8	15	22	12
<i>Do you approve or disapprove of the way that Gray Davis is handling the issue of the electricity problem in California?</i>						
Approve	29%	38%	19%	25%	33%	36%
Disapprove	60	52	72	65	53	54
Don't know	11	10	9	10	14	10

## President's Job Approval Ratings

A solid majority of Californians, 57 percent, approves of the way that President George W. Bush is handling his job, while 36 percent disapprove. This is similar to his national approval ratings in early May in a *Newsweek* poll (57%) and Gallup/CNN/*USA Today* poll (53%).

Bush's approval ratings show strong party influence: 88 percent of Republicans approve of the job he is doing in office, compared with 37 percent of Democrats and 54 percent of other voters. Bush's ratings do not vary much by age, education, or income. Non-Hispanic whites (59%) are a little more positive toward Bush than are Latinos (54%), and men (60%) are somewhat more approving than women (54%). These demographic trends, however, also reflect partisan differences. The president's approval ratings also vary by region: They are lower in the San Francisco Bay area (47%) and Los Angeles (52%) than in the rest of Southern California (65%) and the Central Valley (63%).

When it comes to the president's handling of the energy crisis, the approval ratings are much lower. In fact, 56 percent of Californians disapprove of the way President Bush is handling this issue. This rating also varies by political group: 57 percent of Republicans approve of his handling of the problem, while 73 percent of Democrats and 60 percent of others voters disapprove. Latinos (59%) are more disapproving than non-Hispanic whites (53%), and there are large regional differences: Disapproval is much higher in the San Francisco Bay area (68%) and Los Angeles (59%) than in the rest of Southern California (48%) and the Central Valley (54%). There are no differences in the specific approval ratings across age, gender, education, and income groups.

	All Adults	<u>Party Registration</u>				Latino
		Democrat	Republican	Other Voters	Not Registered to Vote	
<i>Do you approve or disapprove of the way that George W. Bush is handling his job as President?</i>						
Approve	57%	37%	88%	54%	55%	54%
Disapprove	36	55	10	41	31	36
Don't know	7	8	2	5	14	10
<i>Do you approve or disapprove of the way that President Bush is handling the issue of the electricity problem in California?</i>						
Approve	33%	17%	57%	31%	33%	30%
Disapprove	56	73	33	60	51	59
Don't know	11	10	10	9	16	11

## Overall Mood

As this year goes on, Californians are progressively more pessimistic about the state's economy and general direction. Today, only 38 percent say the state can expect good economic times in the coming year—a 13-point drop since last January and a 34-point drop since August 2000. For the first time since we began asking this question in September 1999, the majority of Californians think there will be bad economic times in the state during the next 12 months.

Currently, 44 percent of Californians believe the state is headed in the right direction, down from 62 percent in January of this year. This decline comes after three years of hovering around 60 percent. For the first time in the three years we have asked this question, a higher percentage of Californians think the state is headed in the wrong direction than in the right direction.

Across the state's regions, Central Valley residents (34%) are less likely to expect good economic times than those living in the San Francisco Bay area (41%), Los Angeles (38%) and the rest of Southern California (38%). San Francisco Bay area residents (37%) are less likely than those living in Los Angeles (48%), the rest of Southern California (46%), and the Central Valley (43%) to say the state is headed in the right direction at this time.

Latinos (51%) are more likely than non-Hispanic whites (41%) to think that things in California are going in the right direction. However, Latinos (60%) are also more likely than non-Hispanic whites (54%) to predict bad economic times ahead for the state.

Californians earning more than \$80,000 (44%) are more likely than those earning between \$40,000 and \$80,000 (39%) and those earning less than \$40,000 (35%) to predict good financial times ahead. However, upper-income residents are only a little less likely (43%) than those in the middle-income (45%) and the lower income categories (47%) to say that the state is headed in the right direction.

The energy crisis plays a role in Californians' confidence about the economy. Among those who say the issue of the cost, supply, and demand for electricity will hurt the California economy, 64 percent predict bad times ahead for the state.

"Turning to economic conditions in California, do you think that during the next 12 months we will have good times financially or bad times?"

<u>All Adults</u>						
	Sep 99	Dec 99	Feb 00	Aug 00	Jan 01	May 01
Good times	72%	76%	78%	72%	51%	38%
Bad times	23	19	15	21	38	56
Don't know	5	5	7	7	11	6

"Do you think things in California are generally going in the right direction or the wrong direction?"

<u>All Adults</u>											
	May 98	Sep 98	Dec 98	Sep 99	Dec 99	Jan 00	Feb 00	Aug 00	Oct 00	Jan 01	May 01
Right direction	56%	57%	63%	61%	62%	66%	65%	62%	59%	62%	44%
Wrong direction	34	34	28	34	31	26	27	30	32	29	48
Don't know	10	9	9	5	7	8	8	8	9	9	8

## News Attentiveness

California's energy woes have clearly made it onto the radar screen of the state's residents: 82 percent say they very or fairly closely follow news about the state's electricity problems. Attention to other news stories asked about is lower, including news about the stock market and U.S. economy (59%), the 2000 U.S. Census and California's population (47%), and the state budget (43%).

The public is following news stories about the electricity situation as closely now as it was in January 2001 (84%) and sharply more than in October 2000 (60%). Eight in ten Californians in all regions of the state closely followed news of the electricity crisis. Latinos (76%) were less likely than non-Hispanic whites (85%) to be following news about the electricity situation.

There were regional variations in attention to news about the 2000 U.S. Census and California's population and news about the stock market and U.S. economy. Latinos were less likely than non-Hispanic whites to follow the news about the economy (45% to 65%).

"Tell me if you followed this news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely..."

	All Adults	Region				Latino
		Central Valley	SF Bay Area	Los Angeles	Other Southern California	
<b>News about the cost, supply, and demand for electricity in California</b>						
Very closely	43%	44%	45%	41%	46%	46%
Fairly closely	39	38	38	40	38	30
Not too closely	12	13	11	12	11	17
Not at all closely	6	5	6	7	5	7
<b>News about the stock market and U.S. economy</b>						
Very closely	26%	16%	33%	26%	29%	19%
Fairly closely	33	33	33	31	34	26
Not too closely	20	25	18	23	16	24
Not at all closely	21	26	16	20	21	31
<b>News about the 2000 U.S. Census and California's population</b>						
Very closely	14%	13%	13%	17%	12%	19%
Fairly closely	33	29	37	37	30	31
Not too closely	29	31	26	27	32	26
Not at all closely	24	27	24	19	27	23
<b>News about the California state budget</b>						
Very closely	13%	15%	12%	14%	13%	16%
Fairly closely	30	29	29	29	32	29
Not too closely	32	27	35	33	31	29
Not at all closely	25	29	24	24	24	26

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## Survey Methodology

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The PPIC Statewide Survey is directed by Mark Baldassare, a senior fellow at the Public Policy Institute of California, with research assistance from Eric McGhee and Mina Yaroslavsky. The survey was conducted in collaboration with The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, The James Irvine Foundation, and The David and Lucile Packard Foundation; however, the survey methodology and questions and content of the report were solely determined by Mark Baldassare. The survey benefited from consultation with Kimberly Belshé, Michael Fischer, Michael Mantell, and others at PPIC and the three foundations who offered their expertise to this special survey on growth.

The findings of this survey are based on a telephone survey of 2,001 California adult residents interviewed from May 1 to May 9, 2001. Interviewing took place on weekend days and weekday nights, using a computer-generated random sample of telephone numbers, ensuring that both listed and unlisted telephone numbers were called. All telephone exchanges in California were eligible for calling. Telephone numbers in the survey sample were called up to five times to increase the likelihood of reaching eligible households. Once a household was reached, an adult respondent (18 or older) was randomly chosen for interviewing by using the “last birthday method” to avoid biases in age and gender. Each interview took an average of 20 minutes to complete. Interviewing was conducted in English or Spanish. Maria Tello translated the survey into Spanish.

We used recent U.S. Census and state figures to compare the demographic characteristics of the survey sample with characteristics of California's adult population. The survey sample was closely comparable to the census and state figures. The survey data in this report were statistically weighted to account for any demographic differences. The sampling error for the total sample of 2,001 adults is +/- 2 percent at the 95 percent confidence level. This means that 95 times out of 100, the results will be within 2 percentage points of what they would be if all adults in California were interviewed. The sampling error for subgroups is larger. The sampling error for the 1,550 registered voters is +/- 2.5%. Sampling error is just one type of error to which surveys are subject. Results may also be affected by factors such as question wording, question order, and survey timing.

Throughout the report, we refer to four geographic regions. “Central Valley” includes Butte, Colusa, Fresno, Glenn, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, Placer, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Shasta, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Tulare, Yolo, and Yuba Counties. “SF Bay Area” includes Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, and Sonoma Counties. “Los Angeles” refers to Los Angeles County, and “Other Southern California” includes the mostly suburban regions of Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego Counties. These four regions were chosen for analysis because they are the major population centers of the state, accounting for approximately 90 percent of the state population; moreover, the growth of the Central Valley and “Other Southern California” regions have given them increasing political significance.

We present specific results for Latinos because they account for about one in four of the state's adult population and constitute one of the fastest growing voter groups. The sample sizes for the African American and Asian subgroups were not large enough for separate statistical analysis. We contrast the opinions of Democrats and Republicans with “other” or “independent” registered voters. This third category includes those who are registered to vote as “decline to state” as well as a fewer number who say they are members of other political parties.

In some cases, we have used earlier PPIC Statewide Surveys to analyze trends over time. National comparisons are from polls by *Newsweek* and by Gallup/CNN/*USA Today* in May.



**PPIC STATEWIDE SURVEY: CALIFORNIANS AND THEIR GOVERNMENT**

**MAY 1-9, 2001**

**2,001 CALIFORNIA ADULT RESIDENTS; ENGLISH AND SPANISH**

**MARGIN OF ERROR +/- 2% AT 95% CONFIDENCE LEVEL FOR TOTAL SAMPLE**

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1. Which of the following best describes the place where you now live—is it a large city, a suburb, a small city or town, or rural area?

- 29% large city
- 21 suburb
- 40 small city or town
- 9 rural area
- 1 other answer

2. Overall, how would you rate your city or community as a place to live? Would you say it is excellent, good, fair, or poor?

- 31% excellent
- 46 good
- 18 fair
- 5 poor
- 0 don't know

3. In the past few years, do you think the population of your city or community has been growing rapidly, growing slowly, staying about the same, or declining?

- 60% growing rapidly
- 20 growing slowly
- 15 staying about the same
- 2 declining
- 3 don't know

4. How would you rate the performance of your city government when it comes to handling growth issues—excellent, good, fair, or poor?

- 7% excellent
- 33 good
- 36 fair
- 17 poor
- 3 not applicable/not in a city/no growth issues
- 4 don't know

5. If an election were held today, would you vote yes or no on a local initiative that would slow down the pace of development, even if this meant having less economic growth?

- 51% yes
- 41 no
- 8 don't know

We are interested in your opinions about the region or broader geographic area that you live in. I am going to read you a list of problems other people have told us about. For each one, please tell me if you think it is a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not a problem in your region. *(rotate questions 6 to 10)*

6. How about traffic congestion on freeways and major roads?

- 60% big problem
- 23 somewhat of a problem
- 17 not a problem
- 0 don't know

7. How about population growth and development?

- 29% big problem
- 37 somewhat of a problem
- 32 not a problem
- 2 don't know

8. How about the availability of housing you can afford?

- 47% big problem
- 26 somewhat of a problem
- 25 not a problem
- 2 don't know

9. How about the lack of opportunities for well-paying jobs?

- 29% big problem
- 32 somewhat of a problem
- 35 not a problem
- 4 don't know

10. How about air pollution?

- 30% big problem
- 34 somewhat of a problem
- 36 not a problem
- 0 don't know

11. Thinking about the next 10 years, do you think that the population in your region will grow rapidly, grow slowly, stay about the same, or decline?

- 60% grow rapidly
- 23 grow slowly
- 14 stay about the same
- 2 decline
- 1 don't know

12. Overall, do you think your local government does or does not have adequate funding for the roads, transit, and other infrastructure projects that are needed to prepare for future growth in your region?

- 43% does have adequate funding
- 48 does not
- 9 other/don't know

13. Some say that local governments will have to spend much more money on new roads, transit, and other infrastructure projects to prepare for future growth in your region. Would you favor or oppose paying a higher sales tax for this purpose?

41% favor  
56 oppose  
3 don't know

14. Do you think that local governments should decide growth issues on their own, or should local governments in a region work together on growth issues?

8% local governments decide on their own  
89 local governments work together  
3 both/don't know

15. Thinking now about the state as a whole, what do you think is the most important issue facing California today? (*code don't read*)

43% electricity prices, electricity deregulation, energy prices  
13 growth, population, overpopulation  
6 jobs, the economy, unemployment  
6 schools, education  
4 environment, pollution  
4 housing costs, housing availability  
4 traffic and transportation  
3 crime, gangs  
3 immigration, illegal immigration  
1 drugs  
1 government regulations  
1 health care, HMO reform  
1 poverty, the poor, the homeless, welfare  
1 race relations, racial and ethnic issues  
1 state government, governor, legislature  
1 taxes, cutting taxes  
1 water  
1 other (*specify*)  
5 don't know

16. Do you think things in California are generally going in the right direction or the wrong direction?

44% right direction  
48 wrong direction  
8 don't know

17. Turning to economic conditions in California, do you think that during the next 12 months we will have good times financially or bad times?

38% good times  
56 bad times  
6 don't know

18. Thinking about the quality of life in California today, do you think things are going very well, somewhat well, somewhat badly, or very badly?

10% very well  
58 somewhat well  
25 somewhat badly  
6 very badly  
1 don't know

19. Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Gray Davis is handling his job as governor of California?

46% approve  
41 disapprove  
13 don't know

20. Do you approve or disapprove of the way that Governor Davis is handling the issue of the electricity problem in California?

29% approve  
60 disapprove  
11 don't know

California population figures from the 2000 Census appeared recently in the news. For each of the following census figures, please tell me if you think it is a good thing or a bad thing or if it makes no difference to you.

21. The state has a population of 33.9 million people.

15% good thing  
33 bad thing  
51 no difference  
1 don't know

22. The state has 4 million more people than it did 10 years ago.

14% good thing  
50 bad thing  
35 no difference  
1 don't know

23. The state has no racial or ethnic group in the majority.

40% good thing  
16 bad thing  
41 no difference  
3 don't know

24. The inland areas of the state—that is, the Central Valley and Inland Empire—grew faster in the last 10 years than the San Francisco Bay Area and Los Angeles.

32% good thing  
24 bad thing  
41 no difference  
3 don't know

25. Which of the following do you think is the single biggest factor that is causing the state's population to grow?

- 55% immigration from other countries
- 25 migration from other states
- 8 children born to current residents
- 7 state and local policies
- 5 other/don't know

26. Which of the following do you think is the most negative consequence of the state's population growth?

- 29% traffic congestion
- 27 high housing costs
- 24 urban sprawl and the loss of open space
- 16 pollution
- 4 other/don't know

27. Which of the following do you think is the most positive consequence of the state's population growth?

- 41% improving job market and economy
- 23 increasing social diversity
- 21 more state and local tax revenues
- 8 more services and amenities
- 7 other/don't know

28. By 2020, California is predicted to reach a population of 45 million, gaining 10 million more people. Please tell me if you think this will make California a more desirable or a less desirable place for you to live?

- 13% more desirable
- 82 less desirable
- 5 no difference/don't know

29. As far as your own plans are concerned, do you see yourself living in your current county of residence five years from now or living somewhere else. (if elsewhere: Is that inside or outside of California?)

- 62% living in current county
- 16 living elsewhere inside California
- 18 living elsewhere outside California
- 4 don't know

People have different ideas about growth issues. Please tell me if the first statement or the second statement in the following questions comes closer to your views—even if neither is exactly right. (rotate questions 30 to 34)

30. (a) Population growth in this state is inevitable. (b) Population growth in this state depends on the amount of roads, housing, and other infrastructure.

- 58% growth is inevitable
- 39 growth depends on infrastructure
- 3 other/don't know

31. (a) Most of the problems that are caused by growth can be avoided with good planning. (b) Most of the problems that are caused by growth cannot be avoided.

- 66% growth problems can be avoided
- 33 growth problems cannot be avoided
- 1 other/don't know

32. (a) Local elected officials should make growth-related decisions after going through a process of planning reviews and public hearings. (b) Local voters should make growth-related decisions by voting on local initiatives.

- 35% local elected officials make decisions
- 63 local voters make decisions
- 2 other/don't know

33. (a) State government should take a more active role in guiding local growth and development. (b) City and county governments should decide local growth and development.

- 24% state government should take a more active role
- 74 city and county government should decide
- 2 other/don't know

34. It is better if new growth takes place: (a) in the developed areas inside the region; (b) in the undeveloped areas on the outskirts of the region.

- 45% in developed areas inside the region
- 51 in undeveloped areas outside of the region
- 4 other/don't know

35. What do you think should be the most important priority in planning for growth—improving jobs and the economy, providing for social needs, or protecting the environment?

- 43% improving jobs and the economy
- 21 providing for social needs
- 34 protecting the environment
- 2 other/don't know

36. On another topic, how much of a problem is the cost, supply, and demand for electricity in California today? Is it a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not much of a problem?

- 82% big problem
- 13 somewhat of a problem
- 5 not much of a problem
- 0 don't know

37. In the next few years, do you think the issue of the cost, supply, and demand for electricity will hurt the California economy or not? (if yes: Do you think it will hurt the California economy a great deal or only somewhat?)

- 62% yes, a great deal
- 24 yes, only somewhat
- 12 no
- 2 don't know

38. Which do you prefer for paying the billions of dollars in state debts from buying electricity over the past few months: (a) issuing bonds that will be paid by consumers through higher electricity rates; (b) using taxpayer funds that would otherwise go to state programs such as schools, health, and infrastructure?

58% paying through higher electricity rates  
 32 using taxpayer funds that would go to state programs  
 10 other/don't know

39. Who do you think is most to blame for the current electricity situation in California? (*rotate*)

32% the electric utility companies  
 26 the former governor and legislature  
 10 the current governor and legislature  
 10 the power generators  
 8 the Bush Administration and federal government  
 8 California consumers  
 6 more than one / other answer (*specify*) / don't know

40. Do you think that population growth in California has contributed a lot, somewhat, or not much to the current electricity supply problems?

43% a lot  
 33 somewhat  
 23 not much  
 1 don't know

41. Does the electricity situation make you more confident or less confident in the state government's ability to plan for the future—including building the necessary roads and other infrastructure—or does it make no difference to you?

7% more confident  
 67 less confident  
 25 no difference  
 1 don't know

42. Which of the following solutions for the current electricity situation in California do you most prefer? (*rotate*)

43% build more power plants  
 27 re-regulate the state's electricity industry  
 18 encourage consumers to conserve energy  
 8 federal price controls on power generators  
 1 raise electricity prices  
 3 more than one / other answer (*specify*) / don't know

43. State officials are looking for ways to increase the electricity supply. Do you favor or oppose relaxing air quality standards that regulate power plants, even if it means more air pollution?

27% favor  
 70 oppose  
 3 don't know

I will read a list of some recent news stories covered by news organizations. As I read each one, tell me if you followed this news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely. (*rotate questions 44-47*)

44. News about the California state budget.

13% very closely  
 30 fairly closely  
 32 not too closely  
 25 not at all closely

45. News about the 2000 U.S. Census and California's population.

14% very closely  
 33 fairly closely  
 29 not too closely  
 24 not at all closely

46. News about the cost, supply, and demand for electricity in California.

43% very closely  
 39 fairly closely  
 12 not too closely  
 6 not at all closely

47. News about the stock market and U.S. economy.

26% very closely  
 33 fairly closely  
 20 not too closely  
 21 not at all closely

48. On another topic: Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that George W. Bush is handling his job as president?

57% approve  
 36 disapprove  
 7 don't know

49. Do you approve or disapprove of the way that President Bush is handling the issue of the electricity problem in California?

33% approve  
 56 disapprove  
 11 don't know

50. On another topic, some people are registered to vote and others are not. Are you absolutely certain you are registered to vote? (*if yes*: Are you registered as a Democrat, a Republican, another party, or as an independent?)

38%	yes, Democrat
26	yes, Republican
3	yes, other party
14	yes, independent
19	no, not registered

51. Would you consider yourself to be politically very liberal, somewhat liberal, middle-of-the-road, somewhat conservative, or very conservative?

8%	very liberal
20	somewhat liberal
34	middle-of-the-road
25	somewhat conservative
11	very conservative
2	don't know

[52-58. Demographic Questions]

59. Some people have thought a lot about growth-related issues, and others have not. How much thought had you given to growth issues before they were raised in this survey—a lot, some, or not much?

33%	a lot
40	some
27	not much

60. How much had you made up your mind about the solutions to growth issues before they were raised in this survey—a lot, some, or not much?

22%	a lot
42	some
36	not much

61. Would you be willing to take part in a local discussion group with other residents about the issues we discussed in this survey?

42%	yes
58	no



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